



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UPDATE: PROJECT CEASEFIRE

JURY CONVICTS KC MAN FOR ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARM

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced today that a Kansas City man was found guilty by a federal jury for illegally possessing a firearm.

Jesse D. Counce, 32, of Kansas City, was found guilty on May 5, 2005, by a federal trial jury of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Following the presentation of evidence in **Counce's** trial, Graves said, the jury in U.S. District Court in Kansas City deliberated for less than two hours before returning a guilty verdict to U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., ending a trial that began on May 5, 2005.

The federal jury found **Counce** guilty of being a felon in possession of a Bryco .380-caliber pistol on Oct. 11, 2003. Under federal statutes, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Counce** has a 1991 criminal felony conviction for involuntary manslaughter.

Law enforcement officers initially discovered **Counce** in possession of a firearm during a routine traffic stop conducted because **Counce** was driving a vehicle with a false temporary license plate. At the time, **Counce** had three outstanding warrants. Upon searching the vehicle, law enforcement officers discovered the firearm in a black nylon bag located behind the passenger's seat.

Under federal statutes, **Counce** may be subject to a maximum sentence of up to 10 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000.

Counce was originally charged in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Sept. 14, 2004, in Kansas City.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelson. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at
www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow